United Nations S/PV.8419

Security Council

Seventy-third year

Provisional

8419th meeting

Wednesday, 12 December 2018, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Adom	(Côte d'Ivoire)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Soliz
	China	Mr. Wu Haitao
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Ndong Mangue
	Ethiopia	Ms. Guadey
	France	Mrs. Gueguen
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Temenov
	Kuwait	Mr. Albanai
	Netherlands	Mrs. Gregoire Van Haaren
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland	Mr. Radomski
	Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
	Sweden	Mr. Orrenius Skau
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hickey
	United States of America	Mr. Cohen

Agenda

The situation concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (S/2018/1059)

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18-43363 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (S/2018/1059)

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Helen Meagher La Lime, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti, to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Serge Christiane, Chargé d'affaires ad interim of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2018/1059, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti.

I now give the floor to Ms. La Lime.

Ms. La Lime (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the situation in Haiti for the first time since I took office as Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

The most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/1059), which was transmitted to the members of the Security Council on 28 November, provides an update and analysis of developments pertaining to the political situation, the operating environment in Haiti and the efforts of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH) to implement its mandate. My briefing will focus on the most important points covered by the report and some of the major events that have occurred since its publication.

(*spoke in English*)

The political crisis triggered by the violent demonstrations in July has been exacerbated by numerous allegations of mismanagement of public funds by the Government. Despite the appointment in September of a new Cabinet led by Prime Minister Jean-Henry Céant, tensions grew further as the population continued to demand improved governance and accountability, and as elements of the opposition called for the resignation of President Moïse. While there were some tense moments during the demonstrations of 17 October and 18 November, the Haitian National Police (HNP) showed professionalism in its handling of large crowds simultaneously — even during the smaller, but somewhat more violent, protests of 18 November, which were followed by a two-day general strike that paralysed the country.

Since then, however, calls from the opposition for new protests have failed to garner much popular support. Concurrently, there were worrying episodes of violence in some of the most notorious neighbourhoods of Port-au-Prince, areas where State authority is limited. Investigations by both the authorities and human rights organizations are ongoing, while our human rights service is also working to determine what happened.

It is against that backdrop that MINUJUSTH strives to implement its mandate. Even though progress has been slow, the visuals before the Council show the incremental, yet positive, impact that the Mission has had on reinforcing rule-of-law institutions, increasing the capacity of the Haitian National Police and promoting human rights in Haiti. At the request of the Prime Minister, we established a joint commission composed of his advisers and MINUJUSTH staff, with the participation of other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, to remove several bottlenecks in the implementation of MINUJUSTH's mandate and to provide a technical forum for transition-related issues. The joint commission has already met three times in constructive dialogue. The law on the creation, organization and functioning of the National Council on Legal Aid was finally promulgated on 26 October, after months of discussion. If fully implemented, it will greatly contribute to alleviating the protracted phenomenon of prison overcrowding. Likewise, following a series of nominations made in the fall by the executive branch, we now estimate that only an additional 60 to 70 judges are required for the tribunals in the country's 18 jurisdictions to operate at capacity.

The work undertaken by MINUJUSTH to increase the capacity of human rights actors in the country is also yielding results. The fact that the Government

now has a dedicated ministerial-level focal point for human rights indicates Haiti's readiness to engage with international human rights bodies and to prepare a national action plan. Another encouraging development is that the Office of the Ombudsperson for Human Rights is slowly increasing its presence outside of Port-Au-Prince. In that connection, the space for human rights organizations to operate in a more conducive environment is expanding.

However, much remains to be done. Successful pilot projects, such as the one that brings together the principal actors in the penal chain to directly tackle the problem of pre-trial detention in the jurisdiction of Port-Au-Prince, must now be replicated throughout the country. The inspection mechanisms in the judiciary need to be made more robust in order to increase the rate at which cases are adjudicated by judges. The issue of gang violence, endemic to a number of neighbourhoods of the Port-Au-Prince metropolitan area, must be addressed in a systemic manner to avoid the types of worrisome episodes that have occurred in recent weeks. In that respect, the executive branch and the Haitian National Police recently committed to increasing their engagement in order to find sustainable solutions to that problem.

A more assiduous and focused Parliament will be required to pass essential legislation, such as the organic law on the Haitian National Police, a new criminal code and a new code of criminal procedure. Finally, it would behove not only on the Government of Haiti but also the international community to fulfil their commitment to fully fund the five-year strategic development plan of the HNP so as to ensure the continued build-up of human, logistical and material capacity of that institution. MINUJUSTH will focus on fulfilling those objectives in the coming months, a period during which the country is expected to prepare for and hold constitutionally mandated parliamentary and municipal elections. Following a request by Haitian authorities, a needs assessment mission was recently deployed to Port-au-Prince to determine the extent to which United Nations agencies, funds and programmes would be able to provide technical assistance and logistical support to the process.

While the totality of the benchmarks will not be achieved by 15 October 2019, with careful and responsible planning all options for the reconfiguration of the United Nations presence in Haiti are still feasible. Close collaboration with the Government and its partners will be essential to achieve a successful transition to a non-peacekeeping United Nations presence in the country. I am pleased to report that, in accordance with resolution 2410 (2018), this month MINUJUSTH will be reducing the footprint of its formed police units (FPUs) from seven to five. The Bangladesh FPU, currently stationed in Miragoâne, and the India 1 FPU, based in Port-au-Prince, ceased their activities on 1 December and will have left Haiti by the end of this year. Their departure is accompanied by a series of measures to ensure civilian populations do not experience a decrease in security. The Rwanda FPU, currently stationed in Jérémie, will be relocated to Miragoâne, thereby giving it easier access to the entire south-west region, as well as to Port-au-Prince. The progressive withdrawal of the two FPUs is being offset by a redeployment of HNP forces to the affected areas. The departure of the other formed police units, which has been planned for in an updated security transition plan, will take place in 2019 if conditions permit.

The success of the MINUJUSTH's efforts, however, is conditional on the good functioning of the Government. That is why in the past weeks I have used the good offices of the Secretary-General to reach out to the President and the Prime Minister, as well as leaders from across the political spectrum and key players of the private sector, to advocate for a de-escalation of current tensions and respect for the constitutional order. I am encouraged by the initial signals sent out by the Moïse-Céant Administration to start a genuine dialogue with the political opposition and civil society, while also launching a number of social appeasement initiatives to address popular grievances.

Let me conclude by saying that the country's current context is laden with challenges, but also hope. The popular call for greater accountability in the use of public funds provides a clear sign of the strength and vibrancy of Haitian civil society, and of its desire to actively participate in shaping the future of Haiti. The prompt and efficient response of the Government to the 6 October earthquake, which struck the northern part of the country, demonstrates the true capacity for action of the Haitian State when it is united. It is therefore important that we collectively assist the country in emerging from the current political impasse. Through a constructive and peaceful dialogue, the democratically elected Government of Haiti could set the stage for the next cycle of elections and continue to implement programmes that will improve the lives of its citizens.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ms. La Lime for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Cohen (United States of America): We thank Special Representative La Lime for her briefing and for being with us today. We appreciate the update on the efforts of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH) and its preparation for a successful drawdown of operations by October 2019. We also always appreciate the excellent handouts, which give us a very good graphic representation of the progress that is being made in the Mission.

Let me start by expressing our support to the people of Haiti, who faced a volatile security situation over the past several weeks. We extend our condolences to the families and friends of the victims, including the Haitian National Police (HNP) and customs officers who perished in the line of duty. We support the rights of individuals to freely express themselves and peacefully protest, but we condemn acts of violence. The United States encourages meaningful dialogue to address points of disagreement and find lasting solutions without violence. We urge all parties and leaders to work together to move the political dialogue forward in ways that advance the interests and aspirations of the Haitian people.

The United States will continue to support the goal of a safer, prosperous future for all Haitians. However, change must come from the ballot box. We know that Haiti is preparing for legislative and local elections next year. Elections can take place only in a climate of peace, tranquillity and transparency and in accordance with Haitian law. Haiti must adhere to the electoral timetable, or risk further instability. We also commend the professionalism demonstrated by the Haitian National Police in maintaining security and preserving public order during the demonstrations on 18 and 23 November, and in the days before and after. However, for the sake of transparency and accountability, we call on the HNP General Inspectorate to investigate all allegations of human rights abuses. That will further strengthen the HNP's ability to carry out its vital mission. The future of Haiti's security depends on well-trained and adequately resourced police. As such, since 2010, the United States has invested more than $250 million to increase the size and professionalism of the HNP through training, equipment and infrastructure. As a direct result of United States support, the HNP has grown from a force of 6,000 in 2010 to more than 15,000 in 2018.

Twelve months into the projected two-year lifespan of MINUJUSTH, the Mission — together with international partners, including the United States — has helped build Haiti's security and justice sector capacities. Furthermore, the Haitian Government has advanced key justice sector legislation, reinforced Haitian National Police crowd-control capabilities and made progress towards addressing international human rights concerns. However, progress is not even across all benchmarks and more needs to be done, particularly on strengthening rule-of-law and anti-corruption institutions. Other challenges include renewing judicial mandates, filling vacant Supreme Court seats, strengthening judicial oversight to combat impunity and establishing a permanent electoral council. We expect MINUJUSTH to continue its work with Haiti to achieve the necessary progress that will permit it to transition to a non-peacekeeping United Nations presence by October 2019. We are optimistic that benchmarks to complete a peacekeeping mission can be achieved by the end of MINUJUSTH's projected lifespan. Work on other benchmarks may be continued after its drawdown.

This is the time to start planning the transition. We look forward to the strategic assessment report due by 1 March 2019. In order for MINUJUSTH's drawdown to succeed, it will require fine-tuned coordination, the full transition of responsibility to Haitian authorities and the planning of legislative elections. The United Nations will continue to play a role in Haiti, but a peacekeeping operation under chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations will not be necessary after October 2019. Until then, continued efforts from MINUJUSTH and the Government of Haiti are essential to achieve the Mission's benchmarks and the common goal of a safer, more secure and prosperous country for all Haitians.

Mr. Llorentty Soliz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation thanks the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for her informative briefing on the most recent events in Haiti and on the activities of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH). We also welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of Haiti.

Bolivia expresses its condolences for the loss of life during the earthquake that struck the island on 6 October. We hope that the affected population can recover quickly from that unfortunate event. In that regard, we commend the humanitarian agencies of the United Nations and MINUJUSTH for their support to the Haitian Government following that event.

Given recent events, we believe Haiti must work towards dialogue and political consensus to allow it to overcome its current obstacles and boost its economic development. We reiterate our commitment to that brotherly country and call upon the international community to continue its efforts to confront the current challenges, mainly related to the security sector, the rule of law and development. That support must be carried out in close consultation and coordination with the Haitian Government, in strict respect for its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

Similarly, we commend the progress in the areas I just mentioned, in particular with regard to the law for the creation, organization and functioning of the National Council on Legal Aid, enacted on 26 October, which is an important milestone for reducing pretrial detention, thereby easing overcrowding in Haiti's jails. We encourage the Government to take the necessary measures for its implementation. Additionally, we urge them to avoid delays in the appointment of judges so as to preserve the rule of law and avoid overcrowding.

We also welcome the fact that the Haitian Government has completed the evaluation phase of the population and housing census, which will provide the necessary information for putting in place sustainable policies that will help it eradicate extreme poverty and meet the challenge of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. We reiterate that doing so requires that external cooperation be better aligned with Government priorities, keeping in mind the scope of those Goals and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Similarly, it is important to strengthen State capacities to cope with natural disasters. In that regard, we commend humanitarian actors such as UNICEF, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team for their coordinated assistance. We call on the international community and donors to provide financial support to consolidate the humanitarian response plan.

We appreciate the progress made in the fight against cholera through the Secretary-General's new approach, and we welcome the Organization's continued support to the Haitian authorities to help combat this epidemic under the framework of the National Plan for the Elimination of Cholera in Haiti. We stress that the Organization and its Members bear the collective responsibility for eradicating that disease. In that connection, we reiterate our call to the international community to work and comply with its commitments and to cooperate with the Republic of Haiti to build robust sanitation and health systems. Cholera continues to be a central problem that affects not only sanitation and access to water but all areas of development and stability in Haiti.

With regard to the progress on reaching the benchmarks, we reiterate that work to that end must be carried out in strict compliance with MINUJUSTH's mandate in the areas of the rule of law and security, in accordance with resolution 2350 (2017), in order to consolidate stability in the country and make progress towards sustainable development.

We commend the Mission's work on the community violence-reduction programme, which involves at-risk women and youth in activities that give them the tools and training to generate revenue, while also fostering community dialogue. We encourage the Mission to continue that work, which has proven useful in reducing crime.

Moreover, we welcome the support provided to Government institutions in the areas of justice, human rights and security, and commend the Mission's work in assisting victims of sexual abuse and exploitation. We encourage MINUJUSTH to continue those efforts and, in line with the zero-tolerance principle, we urge that the people responsible for those crimes be punished accordingly.

Finally, we stress that there can be no development without peace or peace without development. As such, we believe that the international community should join forces and enhance synergies with the Government in the framework of the MINUJUSTH mandate.

As this is my delegation's last statement on this issue as an elected, non-permanent member of the Security Council, I would like to underscore that the situation in Haiti — as described by various officials as well as by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General — is clearly not a threat to international peace

and security. Therefore, it will no longer the purview of the Security Council following the planned closure of MINUJUSTH.

Mr. Albanai (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH), Ms. Helen Meagher La Lime, for her valuable briefing regarding developments of the situation in Haiti as well as the role of MINUJUSTH. I would like to focus on three key aspects concerning our topic today, namely, political, humanitarian and security aspects.

We followed with concern the demonstrations and protests that took place in October and November following two reports by the Senate in Haiti regarding mismanagement of the PetroCaribe Fund. The protesters called for fighting corruption and improving social services. Although those demonstrations led to several deaths and many wounded, the Haitian National Police demonstrated professionalism and succeeded in preventing vandalism, which could have led to more civilian casualties.

We support the measures taken by Government authorities under the leadership of President Moïse to meet the demands of the protesters. That resulted in the dismissal of many Government advisers and the setting up an independent committee with the purpose of overseeing investigations relating to corruption.

The Parliament recently adopted a revised general budget law for the period 2017-2018, following the reinstatement of fuel subsidies. The Parliament also adopted a law establishing the National Council on Legal Aid. Despite the importance of those two laws, the present legislative activity of the Parliament has not yet risen to the aspirations of the Haitian people vis-à-vis the creation of an integrated legal environment that enables national institutions to shoulder their full responsibilities.

During our previous meeting on Haiti (see S/PV.8342) I addressed several issues that could improve the humanitarian situation, including providing capacity-building for national institutions to increase their effectiveness in addressing natural disasters. Accordingly, we view the determination of the Haitian Government to establish a standing mechanism for crisis management as a positive step in that direction, especially after the earthquake that struck northern parts of the country and led to human and material damage. In that regard, I extend our sincere condolences to the Government and the people of Haiti for the victims.

We have also followed up on the progress achieved to address the cholera epidemic. The United Nation continues to support the Haitian authorities in implementing the national plan to eradicate the cholera epidemic. Both the authorities and the United Nations must continue their efforts until the epidemic is fully eradicated as planned.

Expediting the implementation of judicial reforms will help reduce pretrial detention rates, thereby also decreasing overcrowding in prison facilities and improving the humanitarian situation.

The Haitian National Police demonstrated competence in dealing with the many demonstrations that took place recently in various parts of the country. The ongoing reduction in the crime rate is further proof of the competence of the police despite an increase in the challenges they face, including the presence of various armed groups and gangs that jeopardize citizen safety and security and negatively impact upon the steady improvement in security throughout the country. It is therefore imperative to proceed with the implementation of the strategic development plan for the Haitian National Police, notwithstanding the difficulties that obstruct its implementation, including scarcity of the financial resources needed to safeguard the success achieved on the security front.

I would like to commend the efforts made by MINUJUSTH, especially those related to implementing the exit strategy according to its mandate when it was established, despite the difficulties facing the various benchmarks for implementing the exit strategy. Finally, we reiterate our gratitude to Ms. La Lime and extend our full support to her and the Mission.

Mrs. Gueguen (France) (*spoke in French*): I, too, would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Ms. Helen Meagher La Lime, for her briefing on the situation in Haiti and the work of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH).

We are now approaching the transition period at the end of which the United Nations and Haiti will open a new chapter in their history, one that will be written outside the peacekeeping framework. In that regard, France welcomes the progress made in the

training of the Haitian National Police. A total of more than 15,000 officers have been trained, demonstrating their professionalism during the frequently violent demonstrations of recent months.

MINUJUSTH's contribution to the country's stability since it was established, a little over a year ago, has been crucial, including its support for strengthening the rule of law, police training and the good offices provided by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. However, the volatility in recent months also highlights how fragile the situation in Haiti remains. In that context, and in the run-up to the withdrawal of MINUJUSTH, I would like to focus today on three points.

First, all political actors must fully commit themselves, as appropriate and in conjunction with the Special Representative's good offices, to strengthening the rule of law in Haiti and responsibly defending the interests of the Haitian people. The adoption of the legal aid law and Haiti's accession to the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons should be welcomed as encouraging steps. However, much remains to be done to strengthen the legislative framework necessary to protect the rights of Haitian citizens and ensure an independent and impartial judiciary. An inclusive political dialogue is needed to reach agreement and ease tensions. France supports the efforts made to that end by the Prime Minister, on behalf of the Head of State.

While the efforts of the authorities and the mobilization of the population in favour of the development of a State governed by the rule of law are real, we nevertheless condemn in the strongest terms the use or threat of the use of violence. In its press release issued of 2 November, the core group on Haiti recalled

> "the democratic legitimacy of the Government of Haiti and that in a democracy, change must be through the ballot box and not through violence."

We deplore the loss of human lives caused by that violence.

My second point focuses on the essential reforms needed to move towards sustainable prosperity and entrench democracy in Haiti. At times we hear voices that defend the idea that economic goals should take priority over the legitimate demands of the people, including when they fight for their fundamental rights and against impunity. That is a false dichotomy. In the current context, stability in Haiti and, by extension, its prosperity, now depends more than ever on strengthening its judicial institutions, providing greater access to social services and improving detention conditions in prison facilities, where there is still work to be done. Dealing with corruption, which is an issue often condemned at the highest level, must be a major part of the various reforms that are crucial to the country's recovery. France encourages the Haitian authorities to ensure that the management of public funds is entirely transparent and do their utmost to see that justice is served, particularly where the PetroCaribe affair is concerned. The sense of impunity must be addressed with determination in the courts.

Thirdly and lastly, France attaches tremendous importance to the vibrancy of Haitian democracy, and in that regard welcomes the commitments made in preparation for the holding of legislative and senate elections in October 2019, in particular the request for election assistance from the United Nations. Haiti's ability to ensure that its elections are held in accordance with its published calendar will increase the Government's credibility. We therefore hope that the elections will be held as scheduled, and that the preparations for them will be conducted in the best conditions possible and with the support of the international community. All the relevant political actors must take advantage of the elections to launch a dialogue with civil society that takes into account the aspirations of the people.

It is our collective responsibility to help the Haitian authorities prepare for MINUJUSTH's withdrawal next October in order to ensure a smooth transition. That is why we must meanwhile redouble our efforts to strengthen the rule of law and democracy in Haiti. Haiti can depend on France's support. My country rejects in the strongest terms any violence aimed at destabilizing the country. It is up to Haiti's leaders from its three branches of Government and across the political spectrum to meet the crucial challenges faced by Haitian society, particularly its young people, and to strengthen democracy and the rule of law so as to ensure stability and a decent standard of living for all.

Mr. Orrenius Skau (Sweden): Let me begin by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for her update today and for the charts reflecting the mandate implementation dashboard, which really help to illustrate the progress on the mandate of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti

(MINUJUSTH) and on her work in Haiti. Let me also take this opportunity to thank MINUJUSTH as a whole for its committed work for Haiti and for its people.

Sweden commends Haiti for the progress made in consolidating democracy and stability over the past two years. We are hopeful that it will continue to make progress throughout the elections in 2019 and beyond. The past few months have shown that there is a need for renewed, broad-based political support for reforms. Accountability must be a key component in delivering on the priorities that the President and his Government have set out. The rule of law and respect for human rights, and improvements in economic development, infrastructure, resilience and security are also important factors in Haiti's ability to further advance on its path to long-term stability. The benchmarks presented in the Secretary-General's report (S/2018/1059) will help focus efforts to support those goals. It is crucial to ensure an integrated rule-of-law approach that encompasses the whole justice chain, from police and corrections to prosecution and courts, and with adequate capacity. The Haitian National Police have made good progress. We also welcome the appointment of a delegate minister for human rights. Other Haitian authorities, with the support of MINUJUSTH, now need to make similar progress in the areas of the judiciary and corrections.

MINUJUSTH plays an important role and should continue to fully integrate gender throughout its mandate as a cross-cutting issue. That includes, not least, establishing measures to increase security for women, and assisting the Government in ensuring women's participation in political processes at every level. We expect the upcoming strategic assessment of the Mission to include gender expertise. We would also like to underline the importance of efforts to strengthen the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse in the Mission. We need to continue ensuring that alleged cases of sexual exploitation and abuse are reported and investigated, and that all necessary steps are taken to apply disciplinary measures and undertake criminal prosecutions to hold perpetrators accountable. The Secretary-General's new approach to eradicating cholera and building resilience in Haiti should also be supported. We were happy to be a sponsor of General Assembly resolution 72/276 in that regard. Sweden has supported the United Nations-Haiti Cholera Response Multi-Partner Trust Fund and encourages others to contribute.

Next year's elections in Haiti will be crucial. We encourage the Haitian authorities to swiftly adopt the new electoral law and take all other necessary steps. Needless to say, we welcome the Government's commitment to ensuring that the elections are held, as scheduled. Credible, transparent and inclusive elections will be a decisive factor for the country's long-term stability.

MINUJUSTH is one of the first missions making a transition from traditional peacekeeping in the era of sustaining peace. The Peacebuilding Commission could provide a useful platform that can be explored in that regard. A successful transition would be important for Haitians first and foremost, but would also serve as an example for the United Nations system. The international community must remain committed to supporting Haiti as it moves forward on its path towards peace and prosperity for its people.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Ms. Helen La Lime, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for her briefing on the situation in Haiti and the work of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti.

In our view, the second of the series of quarterly reports (S/2018/1059) mandated by resolution 2410 (2018) is a remarkably objective reflection of a complex situation in a critical period for the country. The closer we get to the time when the Council must consider the issue of the Mission's closure, the more frequently Haiti and its people are encountering challenges that they will soon have to deal with by themselves and take national ownership of. The already very fragile security situation has been subjected to new stresses. The mass protests, which reached a peak on 17 October and again on 18 November, emphasized that resolving any of the issues between the people and the Government must be done through direct, constructive and, most importantly, peaceful dialogue, and strictly within the framework of Haiti's legal arena. We believe that its citizens' inalienable right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression must be exercised solely in compliance with their national legislation. We support our colleagues who have urged the demonstrators to respect the law and refrain from violence or action that undermines Haiti's stability and social order. We hope that our Security Council partners will take a similar position on all such situations, wherever they may happen to take place.

We are pleased with the report's positive assessment of the process of transferring responsibility to the Haitian National Police. We were interested in the description of the fact that the work of dealing with the mass protests enabled the police to display the professional skills they have gained. While those complimentary assessments give rise to optimism, we were surprised that the report made reference in that regard to some so-called international stakeholders who remain nameless. We would like to see the Secretary-General's own assessments in his reports, based on information provided by the Mission. We cannot ignore a statement in the section of the report on human rights to the effect that during the reporting period the Mission cited 15 violations allegedly committed by the police. In every instance, for example in paragraph 56, there are references to allegations of the excessive use of force by police officers. We want to stress that this wording is too vague for a report on an issue as critical as human rights. We would like to point out that in April (see S/PV.8226), our American colleagues insisted that resolution 2410 (2018) should apply the provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations to the Mission's entire mandate, which undermined the Council's long-standing consensus on Haiti. Was that really done so that we now have to discuss certain proposals?

We are extremely alarmed by the report's assessments of the rapidly deteriorating economic and humanitarian situation. The plight of a significant part of the population is being compounded by continuing outbreaks of cholera, while only 11 per cent of this year's humanitarian response plan has been funded. On top of that, the earthquake that occurred on 6 October resulted in 18 deaths and has either destroyed or damaged around 11,000 homes.

In these exceedingly difficult circumstances, the Government, led by President Jovenel Moïse, has made serious efforts to make progress in accordance with the Secretary-General's benchmarks, including in the areas of political reform, security, the strengthening of the judicial system and, of course, the police. However, we believe that it is crucial to ensure that the legislative, executive and judicial branches of the authorities work together. Needless to say, neither can the international community remain indifferent. It must help the Government and the people of Haiti to establish their national ownership of post-conflict peacebuilding. The United Nations staff still have a great deal to do in their task of providing the Haitian authorities with as much assistance as possible.

Russia supports Port-au-Prince and will continue to work to ensure that the Security Council's efforts will result in genuinely normalizing the situation in Haiti and strengthening its sovereignty and self-sufficiency.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting, and Special Representative La Lime for her briefing.

The recent political situation in Haiti has been marked by instability, with demonstrations and violence occurring in various parts of the country. The security situation therefore remains fragile. Meanwhile, the economic situation and people's livelihoods in Haiti are in urgent need of improvement. In addition, the cholera epidemic and the grim humanitarian situation persist. China takes note that in his latest report (S/2018/1059) to the Security Council, the Secretary-General calls on the Haitian Government to pay more attention to its people's demands and take concrete action to address corruption. China urges the Haitian Government to take a more serious attitude to engaging in political dialogue with all parties in the country with a view to properly resolving their differences through consultations.

The international community should continue to increase its focus on the political, economic and humanitarian situation in Haiti and help the country maintain national stability, promote economic development, improve its people's livelihoods and implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. China appreciates the recent efforts of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH) and Special Representative of the Secretary-General La Lime, and supports MINUJUSTH and the United Nations country team in continuing to provide justice support to Haiti in accordance with their mandates to help the Government strengthen its legislative and judicial functions and strengthen the capacity of the Haitian National police with a view to enabling the Government to effectively assume the responsibility of maintaining the country's security and stability. The Haitian Government should continue to strengthen coordination with the United Nations and cooperate with the United Nations in the work needed to achieve MINUJUSTH's exit strategy.

Mrs. Gregoire Van Haaren (Netherlands) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to thank Special

Representative Helen La Lime for her efforts on behalf of Haiti and for her first briefing to the Council.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the observer of the European Union.

We are following the situation in Haiti with particular attention. Three of the four countries that make up our Kingdom are located in the Caribbean, including Sint Maarten, a neighbour of Haiti, and the Prime Minister of Sint Maarten, Ms. Marlin-Romeo, addressed the Council during our September meeting on Haiti (see S/PV.8342). We have been encouraged by the positive path that Haiti has taken with the support of the United Nations and the international community in the past few years. It is now at a crossroads where it is essential to consolidate and develop the gains made so far. Today I would like to address three issues — threats to political stability, the establishment of the rule of law and prospects for the future.

In recent months, many Haitians have protested about the Government authorities' lack of control and accountability. The Government must take its citizens' grievances seriously. At the same time, it is important that all political stakeholders engage constructively and act in the interests of the Haitian people, while respecting democratic institutions. We are concerned about the violence that has occurred during some of the demonstrations, partly provoked and committed by armed gangs. Such acts are unacceptable and undermine the fragile political situation in Haiti.

Those developments underscore the importance of improving the efforts to achieve the benchmarks outlined in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/1054) for consolidating the rule of law. In the past few years Haiti has made significant progress in establishing the rule of law in a challenging environment. The progress of the national police in terms of its capacity and professionalism, which has been reflected in its management of the recent mass demonstrations and in the increase in its numbers of female officers, is a positive example in that regard. The achievement of several of the established goals therefore seems within reach. We also welcome the recent appointment of a delegate minister for human rights, who will be responsible for the speedy development of a national human rights action plan.

Despite the progress in those areas, it is clear that we have to step on the gas. In that regard, we welcomed the establishment of the joint commission. In order to meet the goals of MINUJUSTH's exit strategy, it will be vital to adopt and implement legislative reforms in a number of key areas quickly and effectively. The country must redouble its efforts to address the major problems of overcrowded prisons, prolonged pretrial detention, corruption and the lack of control and accountability in the public sector, including the police. That requires a total political commitment and the allocation of adequate financial resources.

That brings me to my last point, on prospects for the future. The rule of law must be consolidated in order to strengthen the people's trust in the justice system and promote sustainable peace and development. The efforts in that regard must be redoubled to enable the transition from MINUJUSTH to another form of United Nations presence to take place next year. Developments in the coming months will inform the debate on the form that such a presence might take. To that end, it will be necessary to assess the risk of destabilization, with a view to ensuring the peaceful holding of elections in October. We look forward to the strategic assessment that should guide that debate. Whatever form the transition eventually takes, it will be crucial for the Haitian Government, the Mission and the United Nations country team to maintain close cooperation.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of the Netherlands firmly supports the aspirations of the Haitian people to achieve peace, justice and development. The conditions necessary for achieving that goal are clear. They are the strengthening of the rule of law, including through increased police, judicial and prison capacity, the rapid implementation of priority measures and respect for human rights. The Haitian Government must take full advantage of the presence of MINUJUSTH to make progress along that path. For its part, the Kingdom of the Netherlands will continue to support the engagement of the United Nations in Haiti.

Mr. Hickey (United Kingdom): Let me begin by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Helen Meagher La Lime, for her briefing, and in particular for the mandate-implementation benchmarks dashboard of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH), which is very useful and helpful. I hope that we will see similar dashboards for other United Nations peacekeeping missions in the future.

It is now approximately 18 months since the Security Council visited Haiti under the leadership of the Permanent Representative of Bolivia, and it is encouraging to hear that progress has been made in a number of areas. The United Kingdom continues to appreciate the work of MINUJUSTH and its support for the Government of Haiti to strengthen the rule of law and further develop the capacities of the Haitian National Police. I also wish to recognize the efforts of President Moïse to finding a constructive solution to the recent tensions. It is clear that the situation on the ground remains fragile. I will limit my statement to three main points.

First, with regard to the progress made against the benchmarks, I want to specifically acknowledge some of the important milestones reached. The United Kingdom has been greatly encouraged by the progress made, ranging from the promulgation and roll out of the legal aid law to the recent graduation of 692 police cadets and an increase in the number of women police, which is now close to the benchmark's target. Both MINUJUSTH and the Government of Haiti can justly celebrate those successes.

However, progress is still needed in critical areas. With legislative elections on the horizon, the promulgation by Parliament of the draft electoral law — already highlighted today by the representatives of France and Sweden — remains vital, as does the reconstitution of the permanent electoral council and the updating of the electoral roll. If the professionalization of the Haitian National Police is to be sustained, then its oversight and accountability mechanisms need to be properly functional. That is paramount to increasing the trust between the State and the Haitian people in order to cement the social contract. And if Haitian rule-of-law institutions as a whole are to stand up effectively and turn new laws into a better reality, then budgets and implementation plans need to be finalized.

Secondly, if political and security efforts to build peace are to succeed, they will need to be accompanied by efforts to address the structural issues that have exacerbated or sustained the grievances of the Haitian people, including with regard to economic opportunities and access to basic services. Dialogue at all levels is essential, and the United Kingdom encourages the Haitian Government, together with its international partners, to intensify dialogue among all stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society, in order to reach greater consensus on shared peacebuilding priorities, including the adoption of measures that can respond to the immediate needs of people and minimize the risk of destabilization or relapse into violence.

Thirdly, and finally, with regard to the MINUJUSTH transition, I want to say, quite simply, that it is critical that we all get this right. We now have a little more than nine months before MINUJUSTH is expected to leave Haiti and be succeeded by a non-peacekeeping United Nations presence. As others have already said today, Haitian ownership and the delivery of critical reforms are essential for the transition to be a success. I was encouraged to note in the report (S/2018/1059) the establishment of a joint commission by the Haitian Prime Minister and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. It is vital that all parties now intensify their efforts to ensure that the benchmarks are met.

I was also encouraged to learn that efforts are being stepped up with regard to the MINUJUSTH-United Nations Development Programme joint rule of law programme and its sustainability in the post-peacekeeping phase. The United Kingdom would welcome similar efforts to ensure the sustainability of MINUJUSTH's community violence-reduction programme.

With the United Nations strategic assessment process now under way, we look forward to engaging closely with all stakeholders on how to make that transition a success. We continue to urge the Secretary-General to be realistic and clear about the division of responsibilities across the United Nations system and to support the United Nations to fill the gaps identified in the capacities and capabilities of the United Nations country team, which is key to a successful transition.

Mr. Radomski (Poland): At the outset, I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Helen Meagher La Lime, for her informative briefing and dedicated service as Head of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH).

Poland associates itself with the statement to be delivered later by the observer of the European Union.

In recognizing Haitian efforts to ensuring the stability of the Government and the prosperity of its people, I must underline our concerns about the ongoing fragility of the situation. The violent events that took place in October and November in Port-au-Prince and other cities in Haiti reflect the ongoing volatility of

the situation faced by the Haitian people. We further reiterate our call on all parties to abstain from the use of violence in trying to achieve political goals, as well as to respect the rule of law and continue efforts to find a consensual solution to the problems faced by the country. Poland encourages the Government of Haiti to continue undertaking concrete actions to address the demands of the population, including through a constructive dialogue with civil society and the opposition. Such dialogue should result in the long-term stability of the country.

Let me underline that we fully agree with the observation in the Secretary-General's report (S/2018/1059) that the holding of elections in 2019 will be a significant milestone in stabilizing Haiti. We recognize and support the Government's request for electoral assistance from the United Nations. In that spirit, Poland encourages Haiti to strengthen good governance, build up public confidence in national institutions and promote private investment, as those measures are critical to fostering sustainable development and ultimately achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Turning to the presence of MINUJUSTH in Haiti, we believe that a smooth and effective transition to a non-peacekeeping presence is possible only through the sustained efforts of Haiti's leaders and people, with the support of MINUJUSTH, the United Nations country team and the wider international community. We welcome the continued contribution of MINUJUSTH to ensuring public security by providing capacity-building services to the Haitian National Police, including operational support and equipment. We note the positive role of MINUJUSTH in the improvement of the Haitian justice system. However, durable solutions will emerge only if the justice sector is reformed along the lines established by resolutions 2350 (2017) and 2410 (2018).

The fragile political and economic situation amplifies the conditions in which human rights are exposed to the risk of abuse and violation. The persistent problems of prison overcrowding and gang activity only add obstacles to the malfunctioning justice system. We therefore believe that paying special attention to ensuring respect for human rights in the work of the security forces and correction officers, as well as impartial justice for all, is truly essential. The Secretary-General's report shows that much remains to be done to achieve the objectives of MINUJUSTH's exit strategy. Efforts must be multiplied to ensure that the benchmarks are reached. Bearing in mind the fragility of the situation and the vastness of work to be done, we believe that the presence of the United Nations in Haiti should not be withdrawn excessively or too early.

In conclusion, I would like to underline our continued support for the Government of Haiti and efforts towards a non-peacekeeping presence in the country. Democratic transitions can be difficult, but we believe that, with determination and the constructive engagement of the international community, Haiti will enjoy a stable, secure and democratic future.

Ms. Guadey (Ethiopia): We thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2018/1059) pursuant to resolution 2410 (2018). We are grateful to Special Representative Ms. Helen La Lime for her briefing on the latest situation in Haiti and the activities related to the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH).

We note the socioeconomic difficulties that Haiti continues to face, and we agree with the Secretary-General that there is a need to find a consensual solution to some of these difficult challenges, within the framework of the existing constitutional dispensation. We believe that strengthening the rule of law and democratic institutions, ensuring political stability and improving socioeconomic conditions are the key elements needed to achieve greater security, stability and future prosperity in Haiti. It is essential that actors from across the political spectrum and from all branches of Government work together for the common good.

We welcome the commitment of the Haitian Government to hold the 2019 elections on schedule. The provision of electoral assistance by the United Nations remains significant, as the elections will be a crucial milestone for the stability of the country. The swift adoption of the electoral law will pave the way for credible, timely and inclusive elections. All political actors should be encouraged to engage in a constructive dialogue towards peaceful elections. We would also like to commend the Haitian National Police for their professionalism and the manner in which they have carried out their activities in a challenging environment.

Ethiopia recognizes the important contribution of MINUJUSTH and we concur with the Secretary-General's assessment that much remains to be done to ensure a smooth and effective transition of the Mission.

Let me conclude by reaffirming our commitment to and solidarity with the people and the Government of Haiti as they continue striving to consolidate the progress made in recent years, and our confidence in the Haitian people's determination to persist and succeed in their quest for stability, democracy and prosperity.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We appreciate the convening of this meeting and the important briefing given by Ms. Helen La Lime. We also wish to welcome the presence of Ambassador Denis Regis, Permanent Representative of Haiti.

Peru has closely followed developments in Haiti — a friendly country of our Latin American and Caribbean region — and supports the vital role of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti in strengthening national institutions mandated to guarantee security, the rule of law and human rights in the country, in line with the targets and indicators proposed by the Secretary-General to drawdown the Mission in a sustainable manner.

The earthquake of 6 October reminded us of Haiti's high vulnerability to natural disasters. We reiterate our condolences to the Government and the people of Haiti in the wake of that tragedy. While acknowledging the Government's efforts to prevent the risks that such disasters entail, including its fight against cholera and food insecurity, we underscore the need for the international community to continue providing humanitarian aid to this country.

We share the concern of the Secretary-General about the lack of progress in key areas. The climate of instability and social tensions make the work of the Mission difficult. We are alarmed by the recurrence of violent protests which, in recent months, have resulted in the unfortunate loss of human life.

The strengthening of the operational capacities of the Haitian National Police should be reflected in more effective action against the proliferation of armed gangs. It is necessary to prevent protests from degenerating into episodes of violence. To that end, we highlight the important programmes aimed at reducing community violence and in particular the work of mobile teams and the development of quick-impact projects. We consider it important to incorporate the gender approach and include youth in the design and implementation of such projects, and to ensure their adequate funding.

We believe that the implementation of the strategic development plan for the police should serve to strengthen respect for oversight procedures and capacities and facilitate access to justice, when appropriate. Reports of abuse and corruption among bad apples in the police force must be duly investigated. In that connection, we reiterate our concern about the persistence of prolonged pre-trial detentions, as well as prison overcrowding, which has led to an unacceptable number of deaths in prison. We encourage the full implementation of the law on legal aid and reiterate the need to complement it with other essential pieces of legislation that remain pending, including with respect to the penal code, the code of criminal procedure and the law on prisons. We also believe it necessary to overcome problems within the Ministry of Justice and appoint more judges in order to facilitate access to justice.

The fight against corruption is a key element in strengthening the rule of law and building the confidence of the population in its institutions. In this regard, we note the announcement to create an independent commission to monitor the investigations of the PetroCaribe case. We hope to have more information on this in the next report.

Bearing in mind that the Mission's withdrawal is scheduled for 15 October 2019, coinciding with the elections scheduled for that same month, we consider it important to provide the required electoral assistance and that the Haitian authorities move forward with the adoption of the electoral law and updating the electoral rolls. We also consider it important that the transition take into account the evolution of security conditions and the overall capacity of Haitian institutions to guarantee stability. Even if the National Police is able to maintain internal order without the support of the Mission, the impact on the other areas of support must be considered, particularly in the area of the rule of law.

We wish to highlight the important role played by the Mission and the United Nations country team in all of these pending tasks, as well as the coordination role of the Secretariat in the framework of the reform process of the Organization's peace and security pillar. In this context, we believe it is important to strengthen cooperation with the Organization of American States and the Caribbean Community.

I conclude by reiterating Peru's commitment to continuing to support the efforts of the Government and the people of Haiti to forge sustainable peace.

Mr. Ndong Mangue (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): In thanking the delegation of Côte d'Ivoire for including this important item on the December programme of work, I would also like to welcome Ms. Helen Meagher La Lime, the new Special Representative for Haiti and Head of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH), for her clear, detailed and most informative briefing. We also assure her that the Republic of Equatorial Guinea is entirely at her disposal, in the confidence that her academic profile and professional experience will add great value to the responsibilities entrusted to her.

The delegation of Equatorial Guinea is alarmed by recent events that have taken place in Haiti over the past quarter, characterized by popular revolts that have caused loss of human life, numerous injuries and considerable material damage. Our most heartfelt condolences go to the Government of Haiti and the families affected. The July protests targeting fuel subsidies, as well as more recent ones denouncing the mismanagement of PetroCaribe funds and a lack of improvement in the provision of social services, underscore the importance of a socioeconomic policy that covers all social strata and demands more from those responsible for its management.

We note the efforts of President of the Republic, His Excellency Mr. Jovenel Moïse, and his Government to resolve that situation through a series of measures, such as the decision to eliminate subsidies for petroleum products and the subsequent presentation of his approach to the Prime Minister to provide all the necessary support to the relevant institutions, in particular the judicial system, in the investigation of complaints concerning the mismanagement of PetroCaribe funds. Such efforts show his willingness to positively respond to the demands of the population. In that regard, we call on the parties involved to remain calm and support the Government's initiative, which has opened a space to investigate the complaints that have been raised.

We welcome the enactment in October of a bill on the creation, organization and functioning of the National Council for Legal Aid, which establishes the legal framework for Haitians to access legal advice, regardless of their social status. That bill represents an important milestone in the effort to reverse the increase in pretrial detentions. The importance of the presence of women in the State's strategic decision-making circles must be stressed. To that end, the Government must achieve the minimum 30 per cent set forth in the Constitution, and not only in departments traditionally occupied by women.

As we near the end of the pre-election year, my delegation urges political actors, civil society and the Government not to influence action that could incite the population to violence, with a view to guaranteeing a safe environment to facilitate the holding of next year's elections, which will be an indicator for the stability and development of the country. In that regard, we commend both the Government's commitment to holding elections on time and its request for United Nations electoral assistance.

With regard to the humanitarian situation, it is important to highlight the important role of MINUJUSTH and other United Nations agencies, which, following the earthquake of 6 October, collaborated on national rescue activities by providing support to the Haitian National Police in the affected areas. Similarly, we commend the support provided during the rainy season, which significantly thwarted the anticipated increase in cholera cases, with new suspected cases declining nationally to an average of 46 per week in September and the first week of Octobe,, compared with 301 suspected weekly cases during the same period in 2017.

Despite the efforts of the Government and the United Nations system in Haiti, we are convinced that much remains to be done to achieve the objectives of MINUJUSTH's exit strategy. It is therefore obvious that important aspects remain difficult to achieve, such as the adoption and, above all, the implementation of laws that are considered to be indispensable to strengthening the rule of law in Haiti. To that end, the leaders and the general population, with the support of MINUJUSTH and the United Nations country team, as well as the international community, should make continuous efforts to ensure an effective and safe transition that ensures sustainable and lasting development in the country.

Mr. Temenov (Kazakhstan): First of all, we join others in thanking Special Representative Helen La Lime for her informative briefing. Since this is her first briefing as Special Representative, we would like to

congratulate her on assuming this important position and wish her every success in all her endeavours.

Kazakhstan would like to commend the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH) for implementing a number of important projects and initiatives, in close cooperation with the Government and civil society of Haiti. We also commend the professional operations of the Haitian National Police (HNP) during the nationwide demonstrations on 17 October and 18 November. We call upon the Government of Haiti to make sure that the HNP strategic development plan is implemented efficiently and in a timely manner in order to further enhance professional training and experience. With a view to consolidating security and stability in the country, it is critical that MINUJUSTH maintain its focus on HNP capacity-building.

The recent massive demonstrations have underscored the importance of building broad-based political support to implement key economic reforms and rebuild trust and public confidence in the Government's institutions, thereby creating the necessary conditions and legal framework to attract investments. We consider all those steps essential for fostering development.

In that regard, we encourage the Government to redouble its efforts to strengthen the rule of law, fight impunity and address corruption, which are the basic prerequisites for long-term stability in Haiti, especially in the light of the upcoming elections in 2019. That will require the concerted efforts of key actors from all branches of the Government, Parliament, judicial system and civil society to work together towards that common goal.

It is necessary to focus on ensuring that the objectives of the MINUJUSTH exit strategy are implemented in a coordinated manner. As the United Nations system prepares for a smooth and effective transition towards a non-peacekeeping United Nations presence, we also draw the attention of the different United Nations entities on the ground and at Headquarters to continue working as One United Nations through a more integrated and coordinated approach. It is necessary to break down silos so as to achieve optimal results for sustainable development in Haiti.

In conclusion, we strongly believe that the Government, the Mission, the United Nations country team and all international and regional partners should continue to work together to plan for the transition and beyond. It will also be absolutely vital to anticipate, address and mitigate all challenges that may emerge from the transition towards a non-peacekeeping United Nations presence in Haiti.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Côte d'Ivoire.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Ms. Helen La Lime, Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH), for her presence and the quality of her briefing. Côte d'Ivoire remains concerned about developments in Haiti. Indeed, the violent social demonstrations of recent months, which have resulted in the loss of human lives and significant material damage, clearly show that this precarious situation requires continued joint national and international efforts for lasting stability in Haiti. In that regard, Côte d'Ivoire welcomes MINUJUSTH's commitment to working with the Haitian authorities to carry out the activities related to its mandate, as outlined in the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2018/1059).

The Secretary-General's report calls for our comments on the following points: the sociopolitical and economic situation, the security situation, and the implementation of the MINUJUSTH withdrawal and the transition strategy.

On the sociopolitical and economic level, the persistent crises in Haiti often reflect the socioeconomic difficulties and political tensions that characterize the country. Unfortunately, they jeopardize the ongoing reconstruction efforts. In response to that worrying situation, my delegation reiterates the need to address the root causes of the crisis. It therefore recommends that concrete measures be considered to alleviate the daily difficulties of the people, combat corruption and shed light on allegations of mismanagement of PetroCaribe funds.

My delegation also welcomes the appointment of a Minister-delegate for Human Rights and the Fight against Extreme Poverty and urges the Haitian authorities to pursue their relentless efforts to restore stability in their country. We also call for the promotion of an inclusive national dialogue that would contribute significantly to easing the political climate and to implementing the principle of accountability, and

a guarantee of the independence of judges who must conduct the necessary judicial proceedings. It is therefore imperative that the international community continue to support the Haitian authorities in order to help them establish conditions conducive to political stability and the holding of peaceful, credible and transparent elections in October 2019.

With regard to the security situation, my delegation welcomes the joint initiatives undertaken by the Haitian authorities, in liaison with MINUJUSTH, to reduce the level of violence and significantly strengthen security. In that regard, we welcome the implementation of the community violence reduction programme in hot-spot areas.

My delegation encourages the continuation of these beneficial initiatives, which contribute to strengthening stability and security efforts by raising public awareness of security and rule of law issues and improving people's confidence in the Haitian National Police and rule of law institutions. However, Côte d'Ivoire remains concerned about the persistent violence carried out by criminal gangs, recurring violent protests and the conditions in Haitian prisons. In view of this situation, my delegation urges the various parties, in particular the Haitian authorities, to redouble their efforts to maintain a stable environment and to accelerate the necessary legislative reforms in order to ensure the strengthening of the rule of law.

With regard to the MINUJUSTH exit and transition strategy, my delegation welcomes the Mission's support for Haitian Government institutions in the areas of justice, human rights and security. It also welcomes the outstanding work done by MINUJUSTH in combating violence and sexual exploitation. We are particularly pleased by the progress made in the implementation of the Mission's mandate, in line with the previously defined objectives.

However, we remain concerned about the report's conclusions with regard to the difficulties encountered in improving the benchmarks. To that end, my delegation urges the Government of Haiti to fully cooperate with the United Nations for the success of the priority tasks identified in advance in order to create the conditions for a successful, smooth and effective transition without a United Nations peacekeeping presence. It calls on the international community to support the Haitian Government in achieving the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to support it in the implementation of the 2018 humanitarian response plan.

I congratulate all United Nations staff who are working tirelessly and sometimes in difficult conditions to build peace and development in Haiti. I also express my country's solidarity with the Haitian people and Government in their quest for stability, peace and development.

In conclusion, I urge all parties to work towards the success of the goals that have been set for the exit strategy of MINUJUSTH in 2019.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Haiti.

Mr. Regis (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to thank the President of the Security Council for having generously invited the Haitian delegation to share its views and comments on the report (S/2018/1059) submitted by the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH), in accordance with resolution 2410 (2018). My delegation has given its utmost attention to the findings, observations and recommendations of that report.

While taking into account the difficulties and problems encountered, such as the recent unrest in the country, the Secretary-General also details the progress made by the Government of Haiti in achieving, as it has pledged to do, the various objectives, targets and deadlines jointly established under the Council's mandate for MINUJUSTH. The Secretary-General's report highlights the significant improvements and successes in the transition to a non-peacekeeping United Nations presence in Haiti. They also build on the major progress made by the country in recent years in all the areas that are considered vital to strengthening the rule of law — be they justice, security, corrections or human rights protection. The results speak for themselves.

The Secretary-General rightly underscores the professionalism of the Haitian National Police (HNP), which has demonstrated its ability to professionally manage the mass protests throughout the country, as seen on 17 October and 18 November.

The adoption of the legal aid law is certainly another important milestone

in improving access to justice. Critical steps have been taken in other areas, as evidenced by the measures taken to strengthen human rights protection mechanisms within the executive branch, as well as the improvement of the managerial and operational capacities of the penitentiary system. The decline in the homicide rate is one noteworthy indicator. The rate decreased by 4.2 per cent to 6.22 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants, one of the lowest levels in the Caribbean, as noted in the report. Meanwhile, elsewhere in Latin America and the Caribbean, homicide rates are 10 to 20 times higher than the global average, at more than 80 per 100,000 inhabitants, according to a recent study by the Inter-American Development Bank.

There are certainly grounds to welcome the progress achieved thanks to the joint efforts of the Haitian authorities and the United Nations Mission. However, with regard to certain indicators considered to be essential to the strengthening of the rule of law, the delays clearly underline the urgent need to redouble efforts at various levels. The Government is fully aware of that. Indeed, much remains to be done, as the Secretary-General points out, to fully achieve all the objectives agreed for the MINUJUSTH exit strategy.

The Government has taken note of those concerns and renews its firm commitment to doing its utmost to honour all its commitments, accelerate change and complete the agreed reforms in order to remedy the persistence of the noted shortcomings, failures and delays, particularly with regard to the dysfunctions of the justice system; the issue of prolonged pretrial detention, and its corollary, overcrowded prisons; the effective implementation of the national police strategic development plan for the period 2017-2021, including through an improved mobilization of resources at both the national and international levels; and allegations of human rights abuses by State institutions and law enforcement officials.

The Secretary-General also echoes some concerns about the overall situation in Haiti and the corresponding risk of destabilization. Everyone agrees that the country has been sorely tried of late. Beyond the allegations related to the PetroCaribe case, the turbulence of the past four months undoubtedly reflects a deterioration in the economic situation, exacerbating the difficulties faced by the vast majority of the population, which suffers extreme poverty. In addition, the prevailing humanitarian situation is complex, as evidenced by the tragic lack of essential infrastructure, the impact of the cholera epidemic, and the massive repatriation of tens of thousands of Haitian migrants from the Dominican Republic, not to mention the consequences of the environmental crisis and the country's extreme vulnerability to natural disasters.

Fortunately, the crisis is being contained through the Government's dialogue with key stakeholders. My delegation reiterates its deep appreciation for the international community's unwavering support following the recent events, especially in the light of the unreasonable demands of a fringe of the opposition. My delegation highly appreciates the support provided by the United Nations system and other partners in the area of security, including in the disarmament of gangs and the reintegration of individuals who have not committed violent crimes. It should be stressed that neither political stability, nor democratic achievements, nor the rule of law, to which the Haitian people remain deeply attached, have ever been threatened.

The President of the Republic, Mr. Jovenel Moïse, has solemnly pledged to undertake the necessary reforms, including by waging a relentless fight against corruption. That fight has begun to bear fruit. The recent actions taken by Prime Minister Jean Henry Céant and the judicial authorities leave no doubt of the Haitian Government's unwavering resolve to fully investigate allegations of mismanagement of PetroCaribe funds and to ensure that justice is rigorously and impartially carried out in the full respect for the rule of law. A calm social environment within the framework of growth and the creation of economic opportunities is essential to the consolidation of the rule of law and democratic achievements.

My delegation has repeatedly sounded the alarm about the adverse effects of the sustained decline in official development assistance to Haiti in recent years, especially at a time when problems are particularly acute. Humanitarian aid is no exception. The Secretary-General rightly deplores the fact that the 2018 humanitarian response plan, which earmarks $252 million in assistance to more than 2 million people in need, has so far been funded only to 11.2 per cent.

The same applies to the new United Nations approach to cholera. At this critical stage, it must be recognized that assistance to victims and their families, as well as the provision of essential health, sanitation and drinking water infrastructure, remain severely

underfunded. The Secretary-General's appeals for adequate funding for the United Nations Haiti Cholera Response Multi-Partner Trust Fund have remained largely unanswered. This situation is a cause for concern. The Haitian delegation has therefore endorsed the Secretary-General's renewed call on all relevant actors, including Haiti's cooperation partners, to take short-term measures to meet the immediate needs of the Haitian people and to alleviate their difficult situation. A renewal of international solidarity is crucial at this juncture.

Beyond humanitarian assistance and above all, the country needs a real international mobilization of resources to ensure stable, substantial and predictable financing for its development; the rapid revival of public investment in infrastructure and social programmes, which have stalled for too long; and the rebound of strong growth, which will help to reduce poverty. That is undoubtedly a prerequisite for achieving the long-term political and institutional stability desired by the Haitian people and the international community.

The Secretary-General's midterm review of MINUJUSTH highlights the important milestones achieved over the past 14 months in the long-term process of strengthening the institutions that guarantee the rule of law and the protection of human rights in Haiti. At the same time, the Secretary-General's report also highlights the magnitude of the problems, needs and short- and long-term challenges facing the country. There is total agreement between the Government of Haiti and the United Nations system on the scope of the task ahead and the efforts required to achieve the agreed targets and benchmarks established as part of MINUJUSTH's exit strategy. Happily, none of the remaining obstacles is insurmountable.

For its part, the Government reiterates its commitment to ensuring that it will overcome the obstacles that may have delayed the carrying out of certain scheduled activities, resulted in the postponement of certain deadlines or hindered the achievement of certain benchmarks that the Secretary-General has correctly identified as essential. New and significant challenges lie ahead in the coming months. In particular, next year's parliamentary elections will be a major test of the maturity, consolidation and stability of our institutions. The Government is already doing everything in its power to enable the nation to successfully meet that challenge. In that regard, it is counting on the full cooperation of the United Nations system.

Lastly, the Government assures the Council that it will take the necessary action to follow up on the recommendations of the Secretary-General. It will spare no effort to strengthen the population's trust in the institutions of the Republic of Haiti, pursue priority reforms, intensify cooperation with the Parliament and the country's political actors in order to meet the immediate needs of the people. It will remain determined to work to strengthen the rule of law and maintain a stable political climate, thereby ensuring a smooth transition to a post-MINUJUSTH era in Haiti — no longer on the basis of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations on peacekeeping, but on that of the Haitian people's just aspirations for sustainable development by 2030.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Mr. Christiane (*spoke in French*): The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania; the candidate countries; as well as the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, align themselves with this statement.

I sincerely thank you, Sir, for giving me the floor at today's debate on Haiti, in which the European Union is always honoured to participate. I also thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2018/1059) and the Special Representative of the Secretary General, Ms. La Lime, for her briefing.

The European Union is concerned about the overall situation in Haiti, which could be described as an economic, financial, social, security and governance crisis. Since July, Haiti has again been experiencing a period of political and security-related instability. Challenges to the new Government and President Moïse have emerged against a backdrop of demonstrations and riots in the country's main cities. Several instances of violence resulted in loss of life and looting in July, as people protested against rising fuel prices and the mismanagement of PetroCaribe funds. Other protests were organized in October. They were better planned and included the deployment of the Haitian National Police, which managed to curb tensions and reduce collateral damage, despite some instances of violence and repression. Another demonstration took place on 18 November, followed by sporadic outbreaks of violence orchestrated by armed gangs, although that

call to violence was not heeded to the same extent as those before it. The country also faces soaring inflation, which is tied to the national currency's loss in value against the United States dollar.

In that regard and given the political instability in the country at the end of the former President's term of office and throughout the last electoral cycle, the European Union believes that it is essential to hold parliamentary elections for the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, within the time limits provided for in the Constitution. Respect for the legitimacy of democratically elected institutions and the regular cycle of elections appears, in parallel and in complementarity with national dialogue, to be sine qua non to the functioning of democracy in Haiti.

As indicated in the benchmarks for an exit strategy prepared by United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti, consensus-based and far-reaching reform of the electoral system would be a key element in preventing further crises and regaining the trust of the population. It appears that the adoption of the two draft electoral laws, prepared by the executive branch, could be complicated. It is therefore essential that the Haitian authorities and parliamentarians work together to organize legislative elections in October 2019. We hope that the elections will be held as scheduled and in the best possible conditions.

The European Union is and will remain a faithful partner of the Republic of Haiti. It remains committed to supporting the country at this sensitive juncture, in consultation with other partners, including in the much-needed reform process. We expect the Haitian authorities to promote the political dialogue required to reach an agreement and ease tensions. To that end, we support the efforts of the Prime Minister.

The European Union supports the work done by MINUJUSTH in support of the development of the Haitian National Police, justice, the rule of law and the protection and promotion of human rights. However, we share the concerns expressed in the latest report of the Secretary-General that the security situation remains fragile and that progress on many benchmarks is insufficient. The continued failure of the Haitian National Police and national authorities to control gang violence, along with accusations of collusion and other problems, is of particular concern. The European Union is concerned about the ability of the Haitian National Police to operate effectively after the withdrawal of MINUJUSTH. It is therefore crucial to complete the work of strengthening and professionalizing the Haitian National Police and to continue focusing on the reform and strengthening of the justice and prison systems and the consolidation of human rights. The departure of MINUJUSTH is scheduled for the same month as the scheduled elections, which have always been linked to instability throughout Haiti's history. That is why it is so important that the elections be held on the dates scheduled.

In conclusion, I reiterate the European Union's gratitude to MINUJUSTH for its contribution in the areas of security, conflict prevention and the strengthening of democracy and the rule of law in Haiti. We believe that the structural causes of instability in the country have not been addressed and that, unfortunately, the political and security situation remains very fragile. Special attention to ensuring respect for human rights in the work of the security forces, as well as access to impartial justice for all, which will be especially necessary. It is essential that the Haitian police and judicial system be effectively prepared to assume in the future all of the duties currently discharged by the United Nations Mission. We believe that organizing the transition of MINUJUSTH will be fundamental in that respect. Together with the United Nations and the international community, the European Union will support the Haitian authorities in building on their commitment and efforts to ensure a better future of peace, democracy, stability and well-being for the Haitian people, who, after so long, deserve nothing less.

The father of Alexandre Dumas, author of *The Count of Monte Cristo*, was born in Haiti. Following in his footsteps, the time has come for the Haitian people to gain access to the treasure trove of happiness after having endured the unjust prison of misfortune.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.